

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: EEC, PO

SUBJECT: THE EC AND PORTUGAL

REF: A) LISBON 2751

B) EC BRUSSELS 4035

C) EC BRUSSELS 2538

1. SUMMARY. THE EC COMMISSION IS NOW IN THE PROCESS OF PREPARING ITS REPORT TO THE COUNCIL ON ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL, BUT NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE YET ON WHETHER FINANCIAL AID WILL BE INCLUDED.
END SUMMARY.

2. THE EC-PORTUGUESE JOINT COMMITTEE WILL MEET ON MAY 28 TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EC COUNCIL AND THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT ON SUBJECTS TO BE INCLUDED IN FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS ON EC ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL. ALTHOUGH THE PORTUGUESE SIDE HAS BEEN DOING ITS HOMEWORK AND WILL MAKE A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC PROPOSALS, MISS NIELSEN, IN THE EC COMMISSION DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS, FEARS THE JOINT COMMITTEE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO AGREE ON ANYTHING BUT A VERY
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GENERAL MANDATE.

3. THE PROBLEM, AS SHE DESCRIBES IT, ARISES BECAUSE THERE HAS BEEN NO DECISION TAKEN BY THE EC MEMBER STATES ON WHETHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, WHICH WOULD BE VIA THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK AND WOULD REQUIRE A FINANCIAL PROTOCOL BETWEEN THE EC AND PORTUGAL, SHOULD BE PART OF THE PACKAGE. MISS NIELSEN SAYS THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES IS SCHEDULED TO CONSIDER THE QUESTION ON MAY 22. IF, AS SHE THINKS QUITE POSSIBLE, THEY REACH NO DECISION, OR IF THEY DECIDE NOT TO AGREE TO GRANT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL, THE THE JOINT COMMITTEE WILL RECOMMEND ONLY A VERY GENERAL NEGOTIATING MANDATE.

4. ACCORDING TO MISS NIELSEN, THE FRENCH ARE THE MOST RELUCTANT TO INCLUDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE PACKAGE, AND SHE IS NOT SURE WHY. SHE BELIEVES THEY MAY THINK THAT TO DO SO WOULD IRK THE SPANISH; ON THE OTHER HAND, SHE FEELS THAT IT SHOULD BE IN SPAIN'S INTEREST TO HAVE A NON-COMMUNIST PORTUGAL AS A NEIGHBOR AND SPAIN SHOULD THEREFORE WELCOME ANY MEASURES LIKELY TO ENCOURAGE THE DEMOCRATIC ELEMENTS IN PORTUGAL.

5. MISS NIELSEN OBSERVED THAT ALTHOUGH THE COMMISSION IS THEORETICALLY NOT SUPPOSED TO BEGIN WORK ON THE REPORT THE EC COUNCIL ASKED IT TO PREPARE (REFTEL B) UNTIL AFTER THE JOINT COMMITTEE MEETS, THE PAPER IS IN FACT ALREADY IN PREPARATION. SHE HOPES TO HAVE IT IN THE COUNCIL'S HANDS BY JUNE 16, WELL BEFORE THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING ON JUNE 24, AT WHICH TIME SHE HOPES THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS CAN BE APPROVED. SHE FEARS, HOWEVER, THAT THE COMMUNITY BUREAUCRACY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO WORK THAT QUICKLY AND THAT THE ISSUE MAY HAVE TO BE PUT OFF TO A JULY COUNCIL MEETING. SHE FEELS IT IS IMPORTANT FOR DECISIONS TO BE REACHED BEFORE THE SUMMER SO THAT THEIR IMPLEMENTATION CAN BEGIN RIGHT AFTER THE SUMMER RECESS. GREENWALD

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